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H. DRINKWATER**

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LABOUR PARTY LIST OF D.L.P. ALTERATIONS

Index No.	Description	Name of Organisation	Present Secretary and Address
A31	SB	Carlisle D.L.P.	Mr. W. ALMOND, Trades Hall, Scotch Street, Carlisle, Cumberland.
L39	CD	Clay Cross D.L.P.	Coun. C. WASS, 40, Spa Croft, Tibshelf, Derby.
A60	SB	Darlington D.L.P.	Mr. T. W. FOSTER, Labour Hall, Garden Street, Darlington, Co. Durham.
G89	CD	Chelmsford D.L.P.	Mr. R. BIRTLES, 69, Weald Road, Brentwood, Essex.
D135	CD	Chislehurst D.L.P.	Mr. W. GILROY, 38, Courtfield Rise, West Wickham, Kent.
B151	SB	Burnley D.L.P.	Mr. J. W. KITCHEN, 30, St. James's Street, Burnley, Lancs.
B155	BD	East Toxteth D.L.P.	Mr. J. W. HORAN, 200, Brodie Avenue, Liverpool 19.
B170	BD	Gorton D.L.P.	Coun. G. R. LESLIE, 40, Booth Street, Gorton, Manchester 18.
E222	BD	Battersea North D.L.P.	Coun. Mrs. C. M. DAVIS, 453, Battersea Park Rd., Battersea, London, S.W.11.
E225	BD	Rotherhithe D.L.P.	Coun. Miss E. GREENWOOD, 47, Aspingden Road, London, S.E.16.
E246	BD	East Islington D.L.P.	Mrs. C. M. GREENHILL, 163, Hemingford Road, London, N.1.
E274/8	BD	Wandsworth B.L.P. and T.C.	Mr. H. HANDFORD, 47, Tilehurst Road, Wandsworth, London, S.W.18.
E279	BD	St. George's, Westminster, D.L.P.	Mr. J. JAMES, National Trade Union Club, 12, Gt. Newport Street, London, W.C.2.
E280	BD	Westminster—Abbey D.L.P.	Miss GRIFFITHS, 54, Millbank, London, S.W.1.
L323	BD	Nottingham East D.L.P.	Mr. T. ROPER, 138, Mansfield Road, Nottingham, Notts.
M351	SB	Walsall D.L.P.	Mr. C. E. TAYLOR, 317, Pleck Road, Walsall, Staffs.
D372	CD	Kingston D.L.P.	Mr. J. H. COCKS, 14, Hillbrow, New Malden, Surrey.
C473	CD	Spen Valley D.L.P.	Mr. J. GREENALD, 71, Longfield Road, Heckmondwike, Yorks.
H477	CD	Cardiganshire D.L.P.	Mrs. EMRYS JONES, B.Sc., J.P., Coedybryn, Synod, Llandyssul, Cardigans.
J547	BD	Pollok D.L.P.	Mr. J. WALKER, M.A., 92, Mossiel Road, Newlands, Glasgow, S.3.
J557	CD	North Lanark D.L.P.	Mr. J. WATSON, 105, Shottskirk Road, Shotts. Lanarks.

SPECIAL NOTICE: Readers are reminded that an entry in this list cannot be taken by us as an instruction to re-address supplies of the "L.O." If this is required *we must be specially notified.*

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Mentality: It Matters

What is that of YOUR Party?

What sort of mentality does your Party possess? Some bright brother might mistake me here and begin to talk of "psychology." But I shun that ill-used word and wider science. I ask you to think of the mental cast or habit of your Party, no more.

For the mental habit of a Party, or an individual, is important. It used to be said that the line a Socialist would take on any particular issue could be predicted: it would inevitably follow—"the Socialist solution."

We won't to-day twit any statesman professing Socialist beliefs that such statement could not be made to-day. We live in opportunist days. Nevertheless, the thinking of great masses of Socialists is still predictable on most issues. One's knowledge of Socialist mentality enables this.

But we want to get at the working, day-to-day mentality of your Party. What is it?

Now there are lots of habits of thoughts, many mentalities. Individual and collective traits don't differ altogether, though the mass does often act differently to the individual.

Let us set out some good and bad habits of mind (or traits of character).

A man may be generous or selfish; ill-natured and quarrelsome or friendly; lazy or energetic; dull-witted or nimble-minded; tricky or straightforward; unambitious or possessed of grit, vigour and a will to win.

That is just a brief enumeration of a few qualities common both to individuals and to Parties. And most Local Parties are definitely characterised by one or more of these qualities of the good sort and the ill. Our readers know full well that *their* Parties can be classified under some of these heads. They have "mentalities," they have formed habits of thought and action which enable many or most actions to be predictable.

We can find possibly a few dozens of Parties which, whatever the issue, will always be "agin the Government," meaning here in the opposite camp to the N.E.C. We can find a larger number which, whatever the issue, will faithfully follow a national lead; we have never known them to rebel.

In money matters we know Parties that never spend except grudgingly; some few because they are misers, but most of them because they are miserable and mean and seem to love their poverty. Other Parties are cheerful spenders, busy money-raisers, and their accounts tell of substantial, useful and multifarious expenditures.

Some Parties, for the whole time we have known them (over 25 years in some cases), have been characterised by fractious meetings, internal bickerings and periodic cataclysms. Other Parties live like doves. They coo to one another at meetings, brotherly love flourishes year by year, and gentle

chairmen rule with benign and glucose mien a docile and willing flock—who never say “boo!” even to a District Organiser! (By the way, do you know any of these Parties, too?)

Then we know Parties that are timid and others over-cautious. The most obvious and necessary tasks are approached with such fear of loss or catastrophe that even a few propaganda meetings, or an outlay on literature, rend their soul. And the veil of the temple itself is rended when the fees to Head Office become due!

On the other hand, some Parties are reckless. In our experience agents have been appointed at £300 a year when there wasn't a fiver in hand. Some Parties have been known to get into four figures in debt. Alas, my poor brothers, and another alas for certain creditors, among whom please number ourselves.

Of lazy Parties there are quite a few. This mention may bring it home to them. Of active, energetic, look alive Parties there are *more* than a few. Be a campaign on, or anything doing, there are always certain Parties that one can be sure will make a showing. Even on some of our frostiest “national campaigns” of pre-war days these Parties always came in with something in the bag.

So then it appears Local Parties have got characters, even mentalities, good and bad. It appears that, if one studied these matters in relation to one's own Party we may get somewhere.

Once again what mentality does *your* Party possess? And another question: Are you satisfied with it?

We have not written this article for entertainment, but for improvement. We think something can be done to improve certain mentalities.

When your Party next approaches vital business, study the approach. Though opinions differ there is certain to be a common metre, selfish, hyper-critical, mean, unjust, grudging, timid, reckless, etc., or else good, Socialist, self-sacrificing, happy, bold, victorious and noble.

Well, if not satisfied, and if you are sure the common metre is actually of the usual grind, hit out at it. It does a Party good to see its own face—actually it also does a Party good to say you are proud of it when it habitually takes the true line.

But a Party will get into bad habits.

It *will* tend to repeat old mistakes. Meanness, temerity, captiousness, and the rest are heresies to Socialist thought and action. Rout out these errors and get your Party to have the right mentality—right with Socialism, right with Party. Then, by the left—quick march!

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

On April 6 Mr. Ellis Smith (Lab., Stoke) asked the Prime Minister if he would appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the future of the Parliamentary machinery and consider how it should best be adapted to meet the post-war needs and, while preserving the rights of private Members, function with speed and efficiency.

Mr. Churchill replied “No, sir,” and added that the forthcoming debate on the Adjournment “may throw new light on the difficulties.”

That “new light” has not been forthcoming. But we thank Ellis Smith, who in many ways has proved his worth in the House.

AMENDMENTS TO PARTY CONSTITUTION

The final agenda for the Party Annual Conference is to hand as we go to press.

On the whole the proposed amendments do not strike us as very important or revolutionary. Why should they be?

The N.E.C. themselves propose several amendments of a minor or clarifying character. The proposal to establish a minimum individual member's contribution of 6d. per month is referred to elsewhere. We greatly approve this proposal which will solve many difficulties and anomalies.

The N.E.C. also revive in a modified form the proposal for national enrolment of members where necessary or desirable: we think there is no real case against this proposal.

We note that there are several proposals by Local Parties to increase constituency representation on the N.E.C., and there are amendments that would make for regional representation.

N.U.D.A.W. desires to delete the “three years' rule,” and in these changing times there is a case for withdrawal. There will certainly be a case for constituency representation to be reconsidered before another three years, if indeed, the constituencies warrant our expectation of a great revival.

LABOUR WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Resolutions on many vital subjects of particular importance to women, including post-war housing and rent control policy, will be submitted to the National Conference of Labour women, which is to be held at Friends' House, Euston Road, London, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 28 and 29.

Other matters to be discussed include juvenile delinquency, infant mortality, the Education Bill, and the White Paper on Health Services, instruction in parentcraft, women police, organisation of private domestic service, price control, post-war holiday facilities and population problems.

The Conference will meet from 9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day under the chairmanship of Mrs. K. M. Shade.

Resolutions for the agenda should be sent to Miss Mary Sutherland, Chief Woman Officer, at the Labour Party Head Office on or before Monday, May 22. It is urged that organisations should as far as possible concentrate their resolutions on the main subjects of the annual report, some of which are listed above.

The Conference agenda, including the annual report and resolution, together with delegates' credentials, will be sent out by Monday, June 5.

READ THE "LABOUR WOMAN"!

The "Labour Woman" is publishing a series of informative articles on "How America is Governed," the first of which appears in the current issue. These are very timely in this Presidential election year. A great deal of vagueness exists in Britain about the American political system, which, as the writer in the "Labour Woman" says, is "only because few people have taken the trouble to tell the British public in simple words that mean the same thing on both sides of the Atlantic just how the machinery of government in America differs from theirs." The writer in the "Labour Woman" has taken the trouble to find simple words in which to present the American system to British readers. Labour men, as well as Labour women, should read these articles. The "Labour Woman" is edited by the Chief Woman Officer and is obtainable from the Labour Party, price 2½d. per copy post free.

MORE CANDIDATURES

CUMB.: Carlisle.—Mr. Edgar Grierson, D.L.P., 268, Warwick Road, Carlisle.

DERBYS.: Clay Cross. — Mr. Harold Neal, M.F.G.B., 139, Cromford Road, Langley Mill, Notts.

GLOS.: Bristol South. — Mr. W. A. Wilkins, T.A., 27, King Street, Two Mile Hill, Kingswood, Bristol.

KENT: Chatham.—Mr. A. G. Bottomley, D.L.P., 30, Riddlesdale Avenue, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

LANCS.: Bury.—Mr. Sydney Hand, T. & G.W.U., 28, Middleton Park Crescent, Leeds 10.

SUFFOLK: Lowestoft. — Mr. Edward Evans, D.L.P., 128, Waxwell Lane, Pinner, Middlesex.

WILTS: Chippenham. — Mr. Andrew Tomlinson, D.L.P., The Boltano School, Shaw Hill, Melksham, Wilts.

YORKS.: Halifax.—Mr. Dryden Brook, D.L.P., 85, Dudwell Lane, Halifax, Yorks.

Spen Valley.—Major G. M. Sharp, D.L.P., Kirklands, Cleckheaton, Yorks.

LANARKS.: Rutherglen. — Mr. Gilbert McAllister, D.L.P., 28, St. Edmund's Court, St. Edmund's Terrace, N.W.8.

CANDIDATURES WITHDRAWN

BEDS.: Luton.—Mr. F. J. Kerran.

ESSEX: Saffron Waldon.—Mr. C. D. Rackham.

LONDON: Paddington South.—Mr. G. I. Thain.

MIDD.: Edmonton. — Mr. Harold Smith.

SOM.: Bath.—Captain E. S. Watkins.

WORCESTERS.: Worcester.—Councillor J. Ferguson.

YORKS.: East Bradford.—Mr. W. L. Heywood.

Sowerby.—Councillor C. H. Wilkinson.

MERIONETHS.: Merioneth.—Mr. T. W. Jones.

BANFFSHIRE: Banff.—Mr. George Mair (killed in action).

LANARKSHIRE: Glasgow (Kelvingrove). —Mr. John Downie.

Northern.—Mr. James Armstrong.

Among the Local Parties

The report of the East Lewisham Labour Party makes inspiring reading. At the end of 1943 the individual membership stood at 1,752, an increase over the previous year of 391 after all losses had been counted out. The total enrolments of new members during the year was 550, from which we gather that over 90 per cent. of the membership is solid and is growing.

Membership subscriptions totalled £274 11s. 6d., an increase of nearly £48. Total income increased by £150 and cash savings were £170. The report rightly pays tribute to the work of Mrs. Mabel Raisin, the hon. secretary, and to the collectors, many of whom carry out their work on Sunday mornings after long hours of work, Home Guard and other duties.

Another triumph in acquiring Labour premises comes from Barnet. From "The Barnet Labour Review" we gather that "congratulations are due to the Premises Committee, which this year will have repaid all the money lent by members and friends to acquire the land and build the Assembly Hall at a cost of £2,000. Of this sum, roughly £1,000 was loan, £700 mortgage, and the remainder a bank overdraft. All these debts have been wiped off with the exception of the mortgage, of which £500 still remains. Prior to 1927, when the hall was opened, the Party had to hold its meetings where and how it could, and there is hardly a meeting room anywhere in Barnet which the Party was not glad to borrow. Now it has a permanent home, with one of the best halls in Barnet, which can and will be used, in the words of the Trust Deed, 'to permit the same to be occupied, used and enjoyed for the purpose of Labour and Socialist propaganda.'

"Since 1927 the debt has been reduced by £1,400, and the question has often been asked by the newer members of the Party, 'How has it been done?' The answer is 'By the enthusiasm and determination of members.' Pride of place must be given to Mr. G. Hayden and his family in holding whist drives, by which £520 was handed to the Premises Fund, besides a substantial amount to Local Party funds. Then the Women's Section has presented to the Premises Fund the

wonderful total of £147. By socials and dances another £200 was obtained by the Social Committee, while for three successive years a "Labour Fair" was held which yielded over £130. By Christmas draws another £200 was obtained, and then, of course, we have been singularly fortunate in having Councillor Rean as secretary of the Premises Committee. His services in arranging the lettings of the Hall have been of inestimable value and played an important part in its financial success. This, then, is how it was done, and the question now is who is going to make that determined effort to raise another £500 so that the mortgage can be paid off and the hall be entirely free of debt and the Party in possession of an asset opening up great opportunities of spreading the gospel of Socialism throughout the district?"

Some useful hints to others are contained in the following letter from the chairman of the Kingston B.L.P.:—

"I thought that you might be interested to know that in our canvassing campaign we have now reached 600 members. You will recollect that we started eight months ago with 75 members and that we are canvassing every Sunday morning, with splendid results.

"We have been so encouraged by our success in this politically backward corner of Surrey that the Divisional Party, not without considerable misgiving on the part of some members, decided to run a demonstration at the local Kingston Empire. We were somewhat daunted by the fact that to hire the theatre cost 50 guineas, but we were able to book Arthur Greenwood and we went ahead. The result has been that we have made a profit for Party funds of £12 and the Demonstration was the best the Party has ever held in the area. With the help of Trade Union branches, neighbouring Local Labour Parties and Co-operative organisations we had sold 1,200 tickets by the evening before the meeting. We again used canvassing to help sales, and a group of us sold 46 one shilling tickets to non-Party members on one Sunday morning. Needless to say, we kept a note of the addresses and we are calling back with a view to joining the purchasers as members."

Paying the Price of Victory

A Reflection: And a Welcome to Sixpence a Month

A friend, very familiar with local Party concerns, recently said to us: "Financially, the majority of Local Labour Parties are living to-day in a fool's paradise." He was right.

A very large number of Divisional and Local Parties have been congratulating themselves since the war began on savings made each year. At first sight this seems a healthy sign, and it is good, too, to note many Parties steadily building up their election funds.

But there is a side to this picture hardly ever looked at. These savings are in most cases only due to the fact that normal expenditure is curtailed by war circumstances.

For nearly six years there have been no local elections. A General Election, too, has been skipped, so have salaries of agents in many cases, while in most places expenditure has been mainly on purely routine work.

* * *

Now we are aware that had there been elections additional moneys would have come in, though war-time elections would not have produced the same funds and the absence of elections have saved most Parties from a state bordering on bankruptcy.

But we perceive in very few instances any real appreciation of the insufficiency of the savings; any recognition of the vastly increased prices we will pay in future expenditure, or any preparation or readjustment of income to meet the inflation which is here and of which there is certainly more to come.

When Local Party expansion begins again, and when elections are on us, many Parties will realise how insufficient have been their efforts to meet the coming situation. The great majority of Parties are carrying on as if, when the war ends, we shall revert to the old order of money values and goods equivalents, and appear to think that if only they repeat past performances (a mighty difficult thing on depleted membership) all will be well and

the money will be found: no thought at all of increased prices or increased permanent costs. We almost wonder if fatalism hasn't replaced Socialism as our guiding star.

Some Parties we should imagine, don't know prices have risen, for their expenditure now is so small that increases haven't affected them. Let us tell them then that envelopes alone show a 300 per cent. rise. As for paper, labour and every other cost, we may well find the sky the limit.

* * *

How are Parties preparing to carry out their work in the future with enhanced prices all round? In many cases *by charging membership and affiliation fees that were found hopelessly uneconomic 20 years ago, with no increase or amendment.* One does really stand aghast at the supineness of some of our own people, the very same persons who accuse others—Parliament and Party—of inaction, of standing still.

How much of lost opportunity for Labour, of lost strength, lost finances, of paralysed Parties and cheated victory can be laid to the door of the men who, 27 years ago, set out to build a new world at a bob a year, will never be known. And the local heralds of a new dawn thought, too, that an affiliation fee of a sixth of a farthing a week (2d. a year) would provide the vehicle for our ride to glory!

But this war came and prices soared—and wages went up because prices rose. Not one Local Labour Party in whole counties, in whole great cities, only a few here and there, thought of asking for the due and proportionate increase. "They won't pay it" was in most cases only a variation and a twist of "We don't want to pay it!" Heaps of Parties have never tried out their chance.

Nor are we ourselves in a glass house. Three times during the war we have increased our own I.M. subscription, and both last year and this our own payment has been *four times* that of

1939. And there are heaps of people who, with increased wages and decreased expenditure (because of shortage of goods) could afford to do this and more.

* * *

And what of the 4s. 4d. a year member? All praise to the Parties who pioneered in this, though here, too, an increase is more than justified.

Four shillings and fourpence a year was a distinct advance and some Parties for years have achieved a fine income from this source running from £100 to £500 per annum.

But the great snag about this subscription has been that it is based on a penny per week and a collectorship problem has evolved. Now a penny per week is an uneconomic collecting proposition. We have the experience of industrial insurance societies and companies to show us this. They, on weekly collections of substantially more than 1d. per member, show expense rates for collecting of from 20 to 30 per cent. (including supervision—an average of 12½ per cent. more for management).

Thus Parties couldn't pay economic wages for collecting, while voluntary collecting absorbs a disproportionate part of Party man-power and itself produces special problems, even losses. The evils under either paid or voluntary collecting are less in close-packed industrial districts than in more scattered areas, but experience shows that the difficulties are there, too.

Monthly collecting, in part, relieves the burden of collecting. But 4d. per month is an awkward sum, and, anyway, no Party has yet shown us that given the full income from a great membership the proceeds to-day, at 1d. per week, are sufficient for all Party needs, or to meet the increased costs of everything which we have mentioned above.

* * *

Therefore, we heartily welcome the amendment to rule which the N.E.C. will propose at the forthcoming Annual Conference which will make 6d. a month the standard individual member's contribution throughout the country and for every Divisional Labour Party.

This new rule will cut the Gordian knot for all of us. It means monthly collecting and hence less burden on collectors; sixpence is an economic sum to collect and an easy sum to

handle. Moreover, we shall hear no more of the bitter complaint of the 1d. per week Parties that they are being undersold by Parties next door who charge less than 25 per cent. of the contribution their own members are paying.

Uniformity will make for increase. The new fee will also make for prosperity, and in every way we commend this proposal to our readers as meeting the needs of to-day's situation and as an attempt to set Local Parties on their feet.

And now for the increased affiliation. Trade Unions are examining their membership affiliated to the Labour Party and thinking out ways of increasing the contracted-in membership and the payments therefrom. The time is over-ripe for dealing with this matter. Local affiliations ought to be to-day an absolute minimum of 1s. per year. We look forward to the day when they will be higher.

But will Local Parties wake up to this money problem? And will they realise that the old order has changed already? Poverty is a disgrace—to those who cause it. And poverty in any Party to-day is home-produced or home-induced. It cannot exist if we are prepared to demand a fair price, not only for others but for ourselves.

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What Sort of an Election?

(THIRD ARTICLE)

"When the election comes, be it soon or late, I am satisfied it will be on the old lines, the Tories fighting us with all the old bitterness, with even greater bitterness than of yore; and we fighting them. It will be a hard-fought, keen election."

That in substance is what a Personality said to us a few days ago. And if anyone knows, he does.

* * *

We have pointed to the straws already. We have also said that though policies galore may be before the electorate it will be the tricks that count.

Consider the electorate. Not even in 1918 were there so many new, untried electors to come upon the lists. Old, steady voters will be out-numbered by new voters. We have an untried course to run.

The old order of battle, too, in the constituencies is changed. We venture to say that not 15 per cent. of the election workers will be the same as in 1935. We shall fight with fresh battalions, new formations, and the captains will be untried also.

There is a great work of training to do. And the old masters are hampered in that their old arts must be practised in new surroundings, or, maybe, not at all. New laws will make a lot of difference, but material conditions due to the war will make a greater difference.

We are going to return to these matters when the Speaker's Conference reports and when we can anticipate the legal changes. And it is too early yet to say how we shall fight, or how we shall have to fight. Sufficient to the day, or, at any rate, till to-morrow, is that factor. But we shall come to it in time.

To-day we should like to study the straws and, though the betting changes every few weeks, there are many takers that Churchill *will* himself come to the country. 'Tis the final folly of all great men the takers count upon, though we ourselves have never thought much of Churchill's greatness: only of his bluff.

But Churchill in all his glory cannot demand the souls of men, and we would gamble on Labour beating the

Tory machine plus Churchill if it is wisely and boldly led. But let us not talk of losing this election and winning the next. That next may be too late, as 1935 was. Did we not predict in that very year that the Tory victory meant war? History has underlined the tragedy. *Don't lose again!*

* * *

One of the straws seems to tell us that Labour, with its once great programme, won't have any of it left to call its own if the election delays too long. Already its foreign policy, as recently published, is tragically alike its coming opponents'—even worse than some of them. And its commitments in post-war arrangements made by the Coalition, may leave it with the task of defending not its own policy but the acts of others and of their own people.

What with that of Labour's programme which has been pinched by other Parties, and the compromises we may be committed to, our own little bit of policy—that which is left after the bones have been picked—is going to be all of it that is least popular and palatable. Wherewith shall we sugar our pill?

Place us not among those of little faith. We do but examine the facts: and we find that beyond our Party's appeal to class, our policies and programmes are not so electorally invincible as we would like them. Policy has been compromised by coalition and collaterally it seems we have converted other Parties instead of the people to quite juicy portions of our programme.

Unpalatable facts these. But is there a remedy? We should like somebody to give us a list of the distinguishing policies and proposals that are truly Labour's own to-day and not now of the Tory or Liberal armoury or part of Common Wealth, I.L.P. or Communist doctrine. Such a sieve wouldn't even leave us Finance or Nationalisation as our especial strong points.

We know, of course, the answers. Labour in power can do this or that the little chaps wouldn't attempt. Our Party is out-and-out true believers in fundamental change, the authors not

the copyists. A bit unconvincing—and to most electors it would be unconvincing also to allege that the others are insincere; that their professions and programmes, so brilliantly set out from time to time, are all a bluff.

The fact is, Labour must face the dilemma we point to. Its limited parenthood or its co-partnership in parenthood during Coalition with certain actual or contemplated legislation requires rationalisation both to itself and to those in the constituencies if we are to have a fair chance in the fight. That's up to our leaders!

We ask in plain English, what is Labour doing to bring out its own strong points and also to explain the circumstances (such as the temporising with other people) that appear to make Labour profess one policy but to be content with another.

* * *

Let no one misunderstand us. We are not adducing awkward facts for the sake of doing so, but merely to show that they must be faced.

We think that the job of illuminating Labour's particular policies is one that a specialist writer could well do in a pamphlet. The other matter is best left to the speakers. Of what avail is it for Labour to reiterate lots of its policies under all sorts of heads which so many other people accept? We want special emphasis on what is ours. True, comprehensiveness is necessary in its place, and as evidence of pride of parenthood. But the electors will want to see the differences. And those differences—the essence of our particular claims and appeal—are worth writing up.

When the election comes the wind will blow on certain Labour Ministries. In the places where men and women talk there are dozens of straws which show that if our opponents don't grasp their chances they will miss an opportunity. But that exploitation is going on now. What *won't* the Tories say of things they now approve when there are votes to be gained by attacking men who did their job?

We suggest that Labour wants an ear to the ground to learn what is said in the clubs and pubs, in women's institutes, and also in several Government services.

God forbid that we should have a pamphlet *defending* this or that. "Explain and be damned; attack and win" is a motto less heroic than it

sounds, but its sense every electioneer believes in. If it comes to a dust-up, as it will, Labour has a pretty good field for retaliation.

We needn't emphasise here the vast field of attack to which our Tory-bossed Government is open. The Labour Ministries are small fry, after all, by comparison. The old order still lives and the central charge against the Government is its maintenance and strengthening of it, in industry, in trade, in the forces, in taxation, and in every way. We yearn for a chance to make and fire those bullets; some are high explosive shells. We'll bide the time.

* * *

But the folly is that bouquets have often been thrown where the bullets would have been better. Labour people have actually convinced themselves and others that the Ministry of Food deserves praise!

Here is a Ministry which has spent untold millions (and it has an untold numerous staff) patching up the defects of the competitive system. It has distinguished itself above all others for conservation of profits and measures in the interests of big business.

Too late has been this Ministry's invariable contribution to inflated prices and its great contribution to inflation is hidden in subsidies. The working man pays the increases in the cost of living through his income tax and supposes the latter is "for the war" rather than for the relief and maintenance of big business.

It is said, too, that, anyway, the Ministry has fed the people. But how? The press (and the politicians) and the middle classes are kept quiet via the hotels and restaurants. Workers who might strike are given works canteens. But the isolated workers and the farm worker (those who find collective action difficult) and the housewives just go short.

We were surprised to find in Labour's food pamphlet this very problem mentioned, but slurred over. Does the writer move about among the restaurant-goers or among the common people? We suppose that, after all, few people in London live very far from a fish and chip shop, but they ought to know that vast numbers of the population *are* underfed—and that while other great sections are getting lots and lots more than their fair share. We'll hear about this at the hustings.

And if you want to know the result

of this widespread under-nourishment, which is a charge we lay against the Ministry of Food, read this:

"Large numbers of youths and girls in the Midlands are in a poor physical condition—only *ten per cent.* out of 1,831 who applied for employment at one factory were found on examination to have no medical defects. Of the rest, 1,488 had minor defects, such as flat feet, knock-knee, defective vision, etc., and others were fit for restricted or no employment."

Labour brothers, here's your text. Ten per cent.! Why even the profiteers are not content with that!

(To be continued)

WEST BERMONDSEY

We hope our readers will attentively study the following extract from the above Party's report. It might well be read aloud at Party meetings:

"The terrible blitz on Bermondsey from September, 1940, to May, 1941, resulted in a loss, through bombing and evacuation of 3,000 individual members to the Party. In terms of pounds, shillings and pence this was a loss of income from members' contributions of over £350 per year. We also lost 250 trained stewards and collectors. The total destruction of the Labour Institute in September, 1940, not only robbed us of a meeting place but one of the finest equipped offices under the control of any political Party in the country.

"We lost a stock of stationery which would have kept many national organisations going for a considerable time. The destruction of the Bermondsey Labour Bakery deprived us of a source of income which very few Parties in the country enjoyed. When the publication of the Bermondsey Labour Magazine had to cease we lost direct contact with every household in the constituency. Another severe loss was the full-time services of our office and institute staff. No wonder the people said the Labour Party in Bermondsey was finished. But they reckoned without the spirit of a band of men and women who remained and were determined to keep the Party alive at all costs. Almost without exception these comrades suffered either partial or complete loss of their homes, some on

more than one occasion. Through all our trials and tribulations that determination to win through prevailed, and it is a credit to all concerned that throughout all the war years not one meeting of the Management Committee has been cancelled.

"The task of reconstruction has been going on with a confidence in the Labour Party and the necessity of having a strong, well-organised Party to demand a better world, free from poverty and war in the future."

"A party of stalwarts, led by Comrade Barrett, devoted one evening per week to door-to-door canvassing for new members. Nearly 200 members were enrolled, including a large proportion of old members who had returned to Bermondsey after being 'bombed out'."

The above quotations are more eloquent of the wonderful faith and courage of Bermondsey Socialists than anything we can add. The epic, however, is not complete without mentioning that 42 Trade Union branches have now been brought into affiliation.

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What a Man, or a Woman, Should Know to Become a Labour Organiser

There are several portents, and certain facts known to us, that make it clear that during the next year or so Labour will have to find and train quite a considerable number of constituency organisers. How many one doesn't know, but we put the figure as at least 150 if the revival of organisation contemplated by the Party (and certainly expected by constituency Parties and candidates) is to be attained.

The majority of the 150 will, we think, be needed in new or revived agencies. There will, of course, be a number of men in the forces, or seconded to other duties, who will be coming back, mostly, however, to their old posts. But the Party, nevertheless, has to provide for a number of retirements that are imminent, as well as for fresh appointments; and though the total number of constituency organisers will even then be far short of proper requirements, the finding and training of 150 suitable persons is no small task.

Our view is that even now the appointment of more agents is seriously hampered by lack of talent. We believe this factor will acutely operate against the staffing of the constituencies in time for the election and for the great battles for democracy that lie ahead. And the question of training is a vital and urgent one.

* * *

The task of actual training is a Party one and we believe renewed and augmented efforts are about to be commenced. The job of serving the Movement commends itself, and rightly so, to many of our readers, who find a joy in organisation and a pride in serving the Party. This article, therefore, is written for them. It is not intended to be a training article, but rather some notes on how a man or woman might acquire qualifications and suitable qualities *now* and in a personal and particular way, in advance of and as a supplement or preparation for specific training.

It is first necessary to understand something of the duties of a constituency organiser. Gone are the days

when a "Parliamentary Agent" was just a qualified electioneer, an expert (more or less) in election law and registration, and with nothing much to do between elections than to revise his register and be a good fellow, well met, to all and sundry. That never was the case in the Labour Party. A Labour agent's task is often as strenuous between elections as at them.

* * *

A constituency organiser's work to-day demands an expert, or at least a working, knowledge of many subjects, and his qualities must consist of grit, tact, drive, industry, moral courage, honesty and the instinct of leadership. No would-be trainee without these qualities will succeed. No training scheme can impart them. But the field of Party work (in which all men must be experienced before they can hope for an agency) affords ample scope for one to acquire and practise these qualities and to prove, too, a true Socialist and loyal friend. Thus armed no man need fear failure either in subsequent training or in the actual work.

The organiser of to-day is a practised electioneer, of course, and has his store of legal knowledge. But besides this, he is a man of many parts. He has, or should have, an office; he must know how to use it, not as a talking shop but as a workshop. He probably types and duplicates, he conducts correspondence, writes articles, drafts circulars, leaflets, posters, etc., and keeps books and records, none of which matters are we skilled in by nature.

The organiser is a qualified interviewer, a first-rate canvasser (in order to be able to train others), the leader in campaigns of all sorts, a moderately good speaker (not for "spouting" but to drive home his ideas); and, mayhap, he must know how *not* to be chained to his telephone, or, alternatively, let his motor be his master. There is indoor *and* outdoor work to do and ordered minds and methods only can accomplish it.

On all sorts of subjects, on Party rules, on chairmanship, on Local Gov-

ernment matters, on Party policy, on Parliamentary happenings, on new legislation and other subjects he must be the Party encyclopædia; he, too, must know our Party and the Trade Union Movement in and out.

Do you wonder that *good* agents are hard to find? Or fail to understand why numbers of good men in the past have failed for lack of suitable qualities? Or disagree with our point that a would-be agent must learn lots of things besides "law and practice"?

* * *

Now for our hints as to how the prospective agent should begin his self-preparation.

First of all we put a study of Party policy. Though possibly feeling quite self-sufficient in this it pays to be thorough and even to trace Party evolution on some questions. But policy, although the inspiration, will not be the tenor of his daily work. He may have occasionally to expound, even to put others right, but his prime function is organisation.

There is no need for an agent to deny himself his reservations on Party policy. A yes man or a Party hack is only less contemptible than the professional agent, holding no views, and ready to serve any Party. But no agent holding violent disagreement with Party policy and using his agency to advance those views, to the almost certain neglect and hindrance of his work, is, to say the least, playing fair. In most cases, not all, the agent will be well advised to keep out of Party differences.

A study of the Labour and T.U. Movement comes next, and to the agent the personnel is important.

The actions and reactions of local Labour Movements can be observed at home. The relative size, outlook, political interest and personnel of the local Unions can be traced nationally from Congress and L.P. Reports. A close study of these is essential. Speeches, speakers, figures should all be looked at and both Reports throw a world of light on the human side of both Movements.

The student will have read books on the industrial and political life and development of Labour, but only by observation and a companionship with up-to-date doings (obtained in the way above suggested) can the would-be agent acquire the atmosphere into which he must later step.

Every agent must know how we are governed locally as well as nationally. There is a library of books on this, so we say no more. We would emphasise, however, that the N.C.L.C. has several courses of profound interest to those interested in this article.*

We want here to warn aspirants against over-equipment in the realms of the study of psychology, heavy economic literature, controversial sidelines, social enigmas, foreign policy, and left wing obscurantism. Some of these are excellent for study and enjoyment, but we are thinking in terms of the man who wants to qualify in practical matters and quickly.

One of the handicaps of some men is an insufficient knowledge or experience of English; this is clear from some former examination papers. We hesitate to prescribe a course of English: it is so big a subject. But the drawbacks are there. The clerk comes along burdened with a business directness and brevity of style; the miner comes along with a most limited vocabulary: both have the qualities of character, the practical outlook and general knowledge, but they would fail in drafting circulars or in writing forceful matter. We still favour the worker as a candidate for agencies in preference to the careerist student, but these handicaps must be removed.

* * *

If there was time we should recommend all aspirants to study English thoroughly, but a makeshift for to-day is *practise*. We recommend newspaper letter-writing as a good way to begin the training, and the submission of drafts of leaflets, handbills and circulars to a kindly qualified friend who will criticise.

But we don't feel that is enough for a first-class agent. The latter knows a trick or two in the science of Publicity, something, too, of the Art of Advertising, and not a little either of the printers' art and typography—all very big subjects, far, far bigger and more intricate than the average man dreams of.

Here opportunity must come in, and if it doesn't we advise our friends to go to the library and, at any rate, take a peep at what the subjects are. For years we ourselves took in "The British Printer," both for its beauty of production and the occasional hints we

* Address: J. M. Millar, N.C.L.C., Tili-coultry, Scotland.

profited by. We also took in some of the publications in the world of advertising and publicity and learned a lot, much of which we have perhaps forgotten. But a smart newspaper, magazine or other advert. always attracts us. We study the punch, appeal and method.

That last sentence contains our advice to others. It isn't imitation one is after, but ideas; and a good agent puts a punch in his publications (i.e., his handbills, circulars, etc.) that makes his work more effective.

We have mentioned that agents often type and use duplicators. It is worth a try to learn how to produce good work. A smattering of bookkeeping is also essential: some Parties have quite big and involved accounts.

A little-thought-of qualification is the geography of Britain; a knowledge of towns, industries, relative populations, our network of railways, county characteristics and geographical relationships, not to mention constituencies and the information contained in political maps.

With that last hint we must close, but no one, we hope, will think that because our suggested studies cover such a wide field the preparation is too much. No man can cover all these matters in any short space of time, but each will know where he needs touching up, and all will know, too, that it pays to keep on studying any subject that affects one's calling.

Above all, study the personal qualities that are desirable and seek for the best.

CORRESPONDENCE

Proportional Representation

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

In reviewing in April Pollard's "How to Reform Parliament," you comment: "We are not at all so keen on representation according to the strength of Parties on so many committees" as is the author. What, then, is your alternative? Is there any other course satisfactory to democrats?

For many years prior to 1939, Denmark, Norway and Sweden elected

their Parliaments by P.R. Each of those Parliaments had a committee system, with Party representation on the committees "according to Party strength." The Swedish Parliament is still fully functioning and "committee memberships are much sought after." The result? "Nowhere in the world does parliamentary government function better to-day than in Scandinavia." (*Democratic Monarchies of Scandinavia*, by Arneson, 1939.) Dr. Harold Butler, formerly Director of the I.L.O., in *The Lost Peace* (published 1941), includes these Scandinavian countries amongst those few "reconciling strong executive action with the free play of popular representation" during the post-1918 years.

In all three of these Parliaments, for some years prior to 1939 Labour was the largest Party, with Socialist Prime Ministers. In Sweden, in 1940, Labour secured, with P.R. voting, a clear majority in both Houses. This Scandinavian experience surely suggests that British Labour would gain by accepting, and applying, wholeheartedly the implications of democracy.

Herbert Morrison's suggestion regarding delegated legislation only emphasises the fundamental importance of our being able to rely upon our post-war and future Parliaments being truly representative.

Yours fraternally,

JOHN FITZGERALD.

(We regret we have no space which we can devote to a discussion on Proportional Representation, but we print the above letter as showing that we have no desire to limit our columns to an expression only of the editor's views.

Unfortunately for our correspondent's point of view, he fails to present any explanation of the numerous failures of P.R. on the Continent and the confusions and political disasters which may be traced to these experiments. Instead, he gives us one solitary instance of alleged success and, in doing so, he gives to P.R. the credit which is due to Labour. Labour, surely, would have done as well in

(Continued on page 15)



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YOUTH

By Frank Shepherd

Not all League of Youth branches have placed their activities in cold storage for the duration of the war. News comes from Luton, via the Secretary, Miss B. Cooper, of a branch working at full speed. This branch holds regular weekly meetings and Sunday hikes and cycle tours. Recent evening activities have included a games tournament against youthful Co-operators, a talk on the British Empire, participation in a tennis tournament organised by the local Youth Council, the second round of which was lost by the Branch after winning the first 13 to 2. Luton charges its members a weekly subscription of twopence when present and one penny when absent, and also derives profit from dances which are held at fortnightly intervals. Most members of the Branch are active within the Wards and take a full share of the task of distributing Local Party Bulletins each month. We are informed that the membership is now larger and more active than ever before.

Good news also comes from the Southall (Middlesex) Branch. The Secretary, Miss J. Dane, informs us that 1944 has every prospect of being the "best ever" in the history of the Southall Branch. Its activities spread over several days each week and new members are being regularly enrolled. Like Luton, this branch has regular week-end outdoor functions, and recently the programme has included outings on Father Thames and visits to Runnymede (of Magna Charta fame) and Kew Gardens.

Organisation is receiving serious attention by the members of this

branch and we have seen a most excellent booklet in draft form prepared by Walter Brown on the duties of the Branch Treasurer, and we understand that chairmanship will be the next subject he intends to tackle. The members of the Local Labour Group are giving monthly addresses at meetings of the branch on the subject of Local Government.

One novelty at Southall is a League of Youth Question Box, into which members drop questions on any subject of interest on which they desire information. At the end of each meeting the box is opened and the questions read, and if the answer to the question is not forthcoming from the floor of the meeting a member is detailed to acquire the information and report back to the next branch meeting. The Southall Branch makes a special point of sending regular reports of its activities to the local press and on an average receives free publicity via this method to the tune of half a column per week.

(Concluded from page 14)

Sweden, or better, with the straight vote. As to Norway and Denmark, there apparently, because of P.R., Labour, which might under our system have held power, merely became "the largest Party" in some Coalition. P.R., indeed, is the progenitor of coalitions. Little countries fell over one another in producing muddle after muddle under that system, but stable governments they couldn't produce. Further, we suggest there is some difference in the problem of Great Britain and that of little States with populations one-eighth to one-fifteenth of our size.—Ed., L.O.")

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